

Yet, Foucault presented the most thorough, as well as the most influential analyses of power-knowledge and governance only later, in his 1970s thinking. We could say that the 1960s Foucault has paved the way for the politicization of the "auditory-sonorous." Next, we should strive to discern whether the 1970s "genealogical Foucault" continues further in that direction.

2 The genealogy of auditory-sonorous power and resistance

Surveillance and discipline: panoptic or panauditory power?

Continuing our journey in Foucault's intellectual history, we now reach the 1970s. The period marks Foucault's introduction of the genealogical approach to history, where the issue of power and its articulation with knowledge really occupies the center. Again, we will mostly have to restrain from entering into any broad discussions on the general lines of Foucault's thinking, but will instead keep on following the development of the "auditory-sonorous."

Without doubt, the most generally known idea in Foucault's 1970s work, and probably in his *œuvre* taken as a whole, is the *Panopticon*, i.e. the general scheme of surveillance and disciplinary power. Foucault elaborated this on a variety of occasions, e.g. in his early 1970s *Collège de France* lectures, but the idea became generally known and highly influential through *Discipline and Punish* (originally published in 1975). British philosopher Jeremy Bentham introduced the concept, first in 1787, in a series of letters. These provide the key textual source for Foucault, out of which he develops his conception of panopticism as the general scheme of modern disciplinary power.

When we read it in its entire length, Bentham's title for his invention already explains that it is not about the design of some particular institution (e.g. the prison), but indeed, about the general model of surveillance-power, to be applied in any number of different social contexts, and groups of persons:

Panopticon: or the Inspection-House: Containing the Idea of a New Principle of Construction *Applicable to Any Sort of Establishment, in which Persons of Any Description are to Be Kept Under Inspection*; and in particular to Penitentiary-Houses, Prisons, Houses of Industry, Work-Houses, Poor-Houses, Lazarettos, Manufactories, Hospitals, Mad-Houses, and Schools: with a Plan of Management Adapted to the Principle: in a Series of Letters.

(Bentham 1995, my emphasis)

The generalized, continuous surveillance, or the creation of the illusion of being under such surveillance, is the *modus operandi* in Bentham's invention. When we turn to Foucault's interpretation, we can note, first of all, his strong emphasis on the centrality of the "optic-visual" in the functioning of this apparatus. Not only does Foucault stress the important role of invisible *visibility* (i.e. of the experience or illusion of being seen all the time by the gaze that remains itself invisible), but he also puts forth the much stronger and more demanding argument to claim that we are dealing with a form of power that is purely, only, and exclusively, based on optics and visibility:

Panopticon means two things; it means that all is seen all the time, but it means also that *all the power that is exercised is never anything but an effect of optics* [...] This power is rather of the *order of the sun*, of the *perpetual light*, it is the *immaterial illumination*, which is shed indifferently on all the people on which it is exercised.
(Foucault 2003: 79, my emphasis)

The Panopticon, the general scheme of disciplinary power, works only and purely through the optics and visibility: by illuminating, by giving visibility. Apparently, we could draw the conclusion that the gaze and the seeing are also the acts that make things visible and cast light, so they can then show themselves. There is a circularity at play between sight, seeing, and the visibility of things. And it is by these circular, visible-optic, and immaterial means, that the panoptic apparatus produces its most pervasive effect, which is not the detection of some transgression, but the production and maintenance of individuality as such. We should observe that the panoptic, individualizing gaze is also spatial, or spatializing in a determinate sense, so that in its activity, two elementary operations are somewhat inseparable: first, individualizing living beings, i.e. replacing diffused and dissolute masses, crowds, and multitudes with a plurality of distinctive individualities; and second, inserting each and every living body in a fixed place, at determinate spatial coordinates, and juxtaposing them alongside others in a homogenous space (Foucault 1979: 143, 151–2, 170, 187, 195–7, 200–3, 216–17; 2003: 77–9; 2001b: 190–207; 1997b: 215).

The optic-visual operation of division does not stop at the detachment of individual humans beings, bodies, or subjects. It proceeds, further on, into the decomposition of the bodies, of their forces and capacities, of their places, of their times, of their gestures, of their acts, of everything, into smaller and smaller visible elements. Then discipline establishes the sequences or the coordinations between the visible elements that are optimal in terms of efficiency (in the performance of a particular task, in the production of a particular result). In other words, a norm is generated as a model image with which the performances can be compared. Everywhere, in

prisons, mental institutions, schools, and factories, the same optic-visual techniques are at work, taking charge of bodies, making them docile and useful, increasing their useful force, training and exercising them, etc. (ibid.: 215; 2004a: 59).

Foucault's argument on the general panopticism of modern society can be read as a critical statement toward Guy Debord's diagnosis, according to which the modern society is essentially a society of the spectacle. Nevertheless, just like Debord's "spectacle," so also Foucault's Panopticon is a form of power that is fundamentally visual-optic in nature. In both cases, it is sight that objectifies, individualizes, divides, separates, and isolates (Debord 1999: 17, 110; Foucault 1979: 143–4, 151–2, 177, 187, 195–7, 200–3, 214, 217; 2001b: 190–207).

In Foucault's view, the "auditory-sonorous" is absent from the functioning of the panoptic apparatus. However, when we return to Bentham's original presentation of his scheme, we can see that this is not the case. Bentham does give a role to sound and auditory perception, with a special sound-conducting and amplifying instrument, the tin-tubes passing from the inspector's lodge into the rooms of each inmate:

Complaints from the sick might be received the instant the cause of the complaint, real or imaginary, occurred [...] Here the use of the *tin speaking-tubes* would be seen again, in the means they would afford to the patient, though he were equal to *no more than a whisper*, of conveying to the lodge the most immediate notice of his wants [...]

(Bentham 1995: Letter XX, my emphasis)

One function of sound and hearing is the crucial one of providing up-to-date knowledge about the individuals under inspection, about their changing conditions, their needs, and wishes. With the help of the proper apparatus (i.e. the tubes), the inspector hears even the faintest whisper of the inmates. This acoustic/auditory generation of knowledge is quite economic: it requires only a minimal expenditure of force and strength from both the subject (the inspector), and from the object (the inmate). Moreover, the surveillance can in this manner make use of the *speed of sound*: the production of knowledge is accomplished instantly, so that any change in the conditions is detected almost immediately, with the minimum of temporal delay. Also, the auditory surveillance makes the inspector as independent as possible from the limits of physical location, and from the distances in space. In a way, the ear and the movement of sound inspires the dream of knowledge, which is regardless of physical obstacles, and without any gaps or delays.

Furthermore, Bentham planned to use sound, and the conductive channels, also in the other direction, i.e. in the emission of commands and orders, through which the inspectors act upon those who are institutionalized:

To save the troublesome exertion of voice that might otherwise be necessary, and to prevent one prisoner from knowing that the inspector was occupied by another prisoner at a distance, a small tin tube might reach from each cell to the inspector's lodge, passing across the area, and so in at the side of the correspondent window of the lodge. By means of this implement, the *slightest whisper of the one might be heard by the other* [...] in all the cases, where directions, given verbally and at a distance, are sufficient, these tubes will be found of use. They will save, on the one hand, the exertion of voice it would require, on the part of the instructor, to communicate instruction to the workmen without quitting his central station in the lodge [...]

(ibid.: Letter II, my emphasis)

The speed of sound is applied to emancipate the inspector—and the manner in which he/she appears for the inmates—as much as possible from the limits of the solid body, from the limits of both space (distance and the need of physical displacement) and time (the non-simultaneity, the deferral and delay). To borrow Paul Virilio's terms, we could say that Bentham has designed an auditory-acoustic machine of speed and lightness, appropriating the speed of sound to eliminate the gravity of the body together with the obstacles of spatio-temporal distance. Through the application of the "auditory-sonorous," this machine detaches surveillance from the physical-geographical space, and strives toward the "real-timeness" of the simultaneous instant (see, e.g., Virilio 1998, 2003).

Through her/his ears, and the "machinated" voices, the inspector can appear as if present everywhere at the same time. Could we not say that in Bentham's scheme, what is produced is a *panauditory* experience, or illusion of *omnipresence*?¹ It is the fantasy of being constantly heard by the all-hearing ear, of being in constant audibility, and of being addressed by a commanding or reproaching voice that cannot be escaped. Should we not acknowledge this panauditory impression, if we want to understand the working of the surveillance machine?

It is this panauditory experience/illusion that is supposed to produce the actual disciplinary effect, and it is also one that distinguishes Bentham's modern invention from the ancient listening apparatus called the *ear of Dionysius* (a cave named after the tyrant of Sicily, located in Syracuse and possibly used as a prison once) (see Schafer 2003; Schmidt 2003):

I hope no critic of more learning than candour will do an inspection-house so much injustice as to compare it to Dionysius' ear. The object of that contrivance was, to know what prisoners said without their suspecting any such thing. *The object of the inspection principle is directly the reverse: it is to make them not only suspect, but be assured, that whatever they do is known, even though that should not be the case.* Detection is the object of the first: prevention, that of

the latter. In the former case the ruling person is a spy; in the latter he is a monitor.

(Bentham 1995: Letter XXI, my emphasis; to compare, Foucault briefly mentions the ear of Dionysius, albeit in a somewhat different context, pointing out that what it does not do is productively entice subjects to speak; see Foucault 2001b: 251.)

Foucault is not ignorant of the fact that the tin tubes figure in Bentham's scheme. Yet, he only briefly mentions this fact without really giving it any relevance, or even stopping to ponder the possible significance of this. Michelle Perrot points out the issue in a discussion (in 1977); however, this is an initiative to which Foucault does not respond. (Ibid.: 197–8; to compare, we can find reflections on hearing, listening, and surveillance in Barthes [1982: 217–20], although not referring to Bentham, or the Panopticon.)

When it comes to Foucault's explicit grounds for his almost complete omission of the issue of sound and hearing, all we find is a footnote in *Discipline and Punish*, in which he mentions that Bentham later expressed some hesitations about the usefulness of the tin tubes:

In his first version of the Panopticon, Bentham had also imagined an acoustic surveillance, operated by means of pipes leading from the cells to the central tower. In the *Postscript* he abandons the idea, *perhaps because he could not introduce into it the principle of dissymmetry* and prevent the prisoners from hearing the inspector as well as the inspector hearing them.

(Foucault 1979: 317, note 3, my emphasis)

In the end, Foucault is reluctant to give up on his characterization of surveillance as *eye of power* (Foucault 2001b: 190–207). However, as we saw, the fact still remains that in his original design Bentham reflected on the uses of the ear, audition, and listening, and their related technologies. It also remains the case that even if Bentham might have also expressed some hesitations later, the design of the acoustic/auditory surveillance had already been made and presented in its details, so that it was already undeniably a part not only of Bentham's work, but also of the history of strategies and technologies of surveillance. Can we really assume that a posterior remark could, as if retroactively, erase the significance, and the effect into the forms of power, exercised by the invention already made and presented? Such an assumption is rather anachronistic, and if anything, it is hardly consistent with Foucault's overt, genealogical approach to historical analysis (see Foucault 2001a: 1004–24).

From the basis of reading Bentham's text, it is difficult to see exactly why the principle of dissymmetry could not function in the acoustic system of surveillance. Besides, after Bentham, there are other examples of

such techniques of dissymmetrical listening used in surveillance (cf. Szendy 2007: 32–9). It is not perfectly clear whether the “symmetry-thesis” is an assumption of Foucault himself (“perhaps because he [Bentham] could not introduce into it the principle of dissymmetry”). Foucault’s argument remains somewhat obscure.

Considering all this, Foucault’s exclusive emphasis on the “optic-visual,” and the absence of other sensory modalities in his discussion of surveillance, can leave the impression that there is an underlying presumption at work in his thinking, according to which vision is by some sort of “natural,” trans-historical necessity the unique sense of surveillance, whereas hearing is essentially excluded. This is a variant of the right of origin argument, already discovered before in *The Birth of the Clinic*, and discussed in Part I in detail. In assuming a trans-historical subject of perception and experience (with its different faculties), set beyond the productive nexus of power, the argument coheres neither with Foucault’s archaeological, nor with his genealogical, approach (cf. Schmidt 2003; Schafer 2003).

However, Bentham’s original presentation of his scheme can also be read in order to contest such an exclusion of the “auditory-sonorous.” We also know that in Foucault’s earlier work from the 1960s we find various openings for such a challenge, and for thinking of power and knowledge in a manner that grants sound and hearing a role. Against this background, Foucault’s omission of the issue of auditory surveillance is all the more surprising. There is some potential in Foucault’s thinking there, which is left unrealized. Below, we will take some distance from the reading of Foucault’s body of texts, and elaborate on one possible manner of realizing that potential.

Panauditory surveillance and its fragility: “A King Listens”

To further clarify what such an auditory surveillance can mean, I suggest we discuss a piece of fictive literature, setting it in relation to the problematic outlined above. The text is Italo Calvino’s story entitled “A King Listens.” As we will find out, this story has utmost relevance as a depiction of auditory perception and surveillance “from the inside,” from the perspective of the surveying agent.²

Throughout the story, Calvino (1988) consistently uses the second person singular pronoun, which makes it difficult for the reader to remain detached from the position of the surveying king depicted. This strengthens the impression that the story is about surveillance, about the surveying subject of perception as such, from the perspective of this subject; not about a monarch in the restricted, literary sense. First of all, the king, maybe more than anyone else, is fixed to one particular place in the palace, at the center of the regime.

In order to remain at the center of the space, of the regime, and to be able to survey from the center into the surroundings without having to move

physically, all the king can do, really, is listen. The activity of seeing, of gazing, of optic surveillance, would require some movement, some physical displacement of the body. In the task of surveillance without displacement, the king himself has become “all-ear,” almost nothing but a giant ear, which is connected to and continuing in the surrounding space (ibid.):

The palace is all whorls, lobes: *it is a great ear*, whose anatomy and architecture trade names and functions: pavilions, ducts, shells, labyrinths. You are crouched at the bottom, in the innermost zone of the palace-ear, of your own ear, the *palace is the ear of the king*.

(Ibid.: 38, my emphasis.)

The story is also quite explicit when it comes to the particular manner of listening, the listening activity, which is practiced by the gigantic ear. It is worth noting that the surveying subject does not simply hear the sounds coming from the atmosphere. She would not be satisfied in being merely a passive receptor for the multiple acoustic vibrations and flows of sound. Instead, it is essential that the listening at issue is characterized in terms of activity, and to be more precise, of a political activity, a practicing of power. The ear aims to survey its environment, to detect signs of either the normal continuation of order, or optionally, of rebellion and disorder.

At first, the story emphasizes that the king’s activity of listening, together with the related art and technique, is one of individualizing and distinguishing sounds, brought to such perfection that she/he is able to differentiate even the most confused and ephemeral sounds:

For you the days are a succession of sounds, some distinct, some almost imperceptible; *you have learned to distinguish them, to evaluate their provenance and their distance*; you know their order, you know how long the pauses last: you are already awaiting every resonance or creak or clink that is about to reach your tympanum; you anticipate it in your imagination; if it is late in being produced, you grow impatient.

(Ibid.: 37–8, my emphasis)

The differentiating activity is also spatialization of a kind. The surveying ear listens by locating, or emplacement at determinate points in space. The ear evaluates the distance, the direction, and the place of the origin of the sounds:

locating every shuffle, every cough at a point in space, imagining walls around each acoustical sign, ceilings, pavements, giving form to the void in which the sounds spread and to the obstacles they encounter [...] The palace is a construction of sounds that expands one moment and contracts the next, tightens like a tangle of chains. *You can move*

through it, guided by the echoes, localizing creaks, clangs, curses, pursuing breaths, rustles, grumbles, gurgles. (Ibid.: 42-3, my emphasis)

We should note that the activity of listening and the formation of auditory experience, as depicted by Calvino, possess such capacities that are related to sight and gaze, and excluded from the sense of hearing, in the theoretical binary setting of the eye and the ear (already discussed on various occasions). The surveying ear has learnt to distinguish and to localize at determinate points in space. The ear is also able to pursue or trace the sounds back to their origins. Listening is portrayed as an activity of the ear, of auditory perception, which projects itself and grasps, instead of passively waiting to be seized and penetrated by the "other" (ibid.: 38, 42-3).³

This account of listening comes close to medical auscultation, as it was discussed in Part I, in light of Foucault's "Message or Noise?" and Laënnec's treatise. It is similar also, when it comes to the centrality of interpretation, of deciphering auditory signs. The acoustic surveillance, in the story, works to turn the confused auditory material, the ambient noise, into distinctive, meaningful signs. First, this can be best characterized as *mimetic*, as well as *indexical*. The activity of listening is a persistent attempt to trace the sounds back to their sources, and to determine their character as coinciding, indexical signs of the continuity of the regime, of the security of the territory, and obedience to the commands, or alternatively, of dangers and threats, e.g. of rebellion and revolution. Or, the surveillance can proceed along a mimetic path, searching for similitudes between the acoustic and the political order/disorder:

If the sounds are repeated in the customary order, at the proper intervals, you can be reassured, your reign is in no danger: for the moment, for this hour, for this day still (ibid.: 37) [...] Your anxiety is not allayed, until the thread of hearing is knotted again, until the weft of thoroughly familiar sounds is mended at the place where a gap seemed to have opened (ibid.: 38) [...] STOP raving. Everything heard moving in the palace corresponds precisely to the rules you have laid down [...] The situation is in your grip; nothing eludes your will or your control. Even the frog that croaks in the basis, even the uproar of the children playing blind-man's-buff, even the old chamberlain's sprawl down the stairs: everything corresponds to your plan, everything has been thought out by you, decided, pondered before it became audible to your ear. Not even a fly buzzes here if you do not wish it.

(Ibid.: 45.)

In its indexical orientation, the story's account of listening is similar to what Roland Barthes (1982: 217-20) calls *alert*, exercised by a "center of surveillance," in service of defending the security of a territory against

potential enemies. Barthes suggests that if there is a particular "organ" or "faculty" that is well suited for the task of simultaneous, constant, and all-penetrating surveillance, for catching every passing index of movement in any corner of the surrounding space, it is the ear and audition, rather than the eye and sight. This alert-listening is common to both animals and human beings. For Barthes as well, the listening in question is understood as an activity of selection, one that is set in a relation of tension with the (supposedly) immersive openness of the ear and audition. To reiterate the point: hearing and listening were shown to have their positive function already in Jeremy Bentham's design of the scheme of the inspection house.

Returning to Calvino's story, the mimetic and indexical listening runs into difficulties. The listening subject can never be absolutely certain, whether even the most familiar, predictable, and regularly ordered sounds are or are not signs of a *coup d'état* already made. The indexical listening ends in ambivalence between the signs of security, death, and danger:

From the faintest clue you can derive an augury of your fate [...] Perhaps the threat comes more from the silences than from the sounds [...] Perhaps danger lurks in regularity itself [...] The regular unfolding of palace life is a sign that the coup has taken place, a new king sits on a new throne, your sentence has been pronounced and it is so irrevocable that there is no need to carry it out in a hurry [...]

(Calvino 1988: 44-5)

In its obsessive desire to survey, to make the whole environment diaphanous, the listening is not satisfied with the mere grasping of indexes. Instead, Calvino's story demonstrates how the listening activity can never really be satisfied with any one modality of interpretation, or in any one genre of auditory signs. Auditory surveillance is set in a constant, restless movement of transference from one modality and genre to the next. When the attempt of indexical determination ends up in indecision and anxiety, the listener, far from giving up the striving after certainty, is already shifting to another modality of interpretative listening, that of deciphering symbols and messages: "From every shard of sound you continue to gather signals, information, clues, as if in this city all those who play or sing or put on disks wanted only to transmit precise, unequivocal messages to you" (ibid.: 51).

Again, we discover a parallel with Barthes: what happens is that listening in the first becomes an activity of capturing and understanding signs in the strict sense, an activity operating with signifying codes, no longer with the "natural" coincidences of indexes (Barthes 1982: 217, 220-3). In our story, for this sort of listening, there is no such thing as mere noise, or "bare sound," but only potential communication: obscure messages that must be clarified, and codes of signification waiting to be solved. If the ear is sharp enough, the noise should give place for distinctive phonetic units,

i.e. letters, words, sentences, and narratives. Or, the ambient noise is replaced by a sequence of ciphers, which can be translated:

For a dialogue you must know the language. A series of raps, one after the other, a pause, then more, isolated raps: can these signals be translated into a code? Is someone forming letters, words? Does someone want to communicate with you, does he have urgent things to say to you? Try the simplest key: one rap, a; two raps, b [...] if the raps follow one another with regularity they must form a word, a sentence.

(Calvino 1988: 46-7.)

The attempt to turn the sounds into speech, and to decipher their meaning through codes of language, turn out to be disappointing as well. The listener can attain no certainty, and cannot decide whether the sounds form a sentence with a reassuring sense, or the opposite:

And now you would already like to impose on the bare drip of sounds your desire for reassuring words: "Your Majesty ... we ... your loyal subjects ... will foil all plots ... long life ..." Is this what they are saying to you? Is this what you manage to decipher, trying to apply all conceivable codes? No, nothing of the sort comes out. If anything, the message that emerges is entirely different, more on the order of: "Bastard dog usurper ... vengeance ... you will be overthrown ..."

(ibid, my emphasis)

When one attempt fails, the surveying ear relocates its hope in another semiotic system. If she is not dealing with speech at all, perhaps the sounds could be from a musical phrase, or then perhaps a message encrypted in yet some other type of language:

Or try Morse, make an effort to distinguish short sounds and long sounds [...] At times it seems to you that the transmitted message has a rhythm, as in a musical phrase: this would also prove a wish to attract your attention; to communicate, to speak to you [...] But this is not enough for you [...]

(ibid)

As we have found out, the panauditory surveillance is not without obstacles and resistances; ones that are, so to speak, immanent to the practice of listening itself. In Calvino's story, the listener—carried away by the panauditory strive to hear everything—becomes detached from the solid, physical body, and from the sense of concrete place. Finally, for the panauditory observer, the difference between inside and outside, between oneself and the other as such becomes undecided. The desire to survey, and to rule the

entire ambient space, paradoxically, immerses the listening subject in the acoustic environment:

the signals that reach you warn you perhaps of a danger buried in your own interior [...]

(ibid.: 43, my emphasis)

You are not convinced? You want absolute proof that what you hear comes from within you, not from outside? [...]

(ibid.: 49)

Are you no longer able to tell the uproar outside from that inside the palace? Perhaps there is no longer an inside and an outside [...]

(ibid.: 59, my emphasis)

The body of the listener is threatened with the loss of its solidity and weight. This is, in a way, both the advantage, as well as the price to pay, of the panauditory omnipresence. Being "all ear," the body of the inspector, but also her self, her personality, is spread out and becomes dispersed into the environment, becoming itself just like sound: "now your person is spread out through this dark, alien residence that speaks to you in riddle" (ibid.: 43, my emphasis).

The perfection of surveillance and the total loss of power, the dispersal of the surveying subject as such, are indeed very proximate, almost like the two sides of the same coin. The question is posed in the story as to whether the incessant quest to know and to grasp everything, to hear everything continuously, immediately, in every detail, is in the end a self-destructive endeavor, inevitably turning against itself, and bringing about its own defeat:

But perhaps you have never been so close to losing everything as you are now, when you think you have everything in your grip. The responsibility of conceiving the palace in its every detail, of containing it in your mind, subjects you to an exhausting strain. The obstinacy on which power is based is never so fragile as in the moment of its triumph."

(Ibid.: 45, my emphasis.)

Through our reading of Calvino's story of the listening king, we have explored one possible way of elaborating further the idea of panauditory surveillance. We proceeded from the point at which Foucault himself stopped. We have seen how auditory perception can be articulated into the functioning of surveillance, but also, that this auditory-sonorous power has its own points of vulnerability and fragility, i.e. its immanent points of resistance.

Sexuality, confession, and the sensualization of power

One of the most central issues in Foucault's 1970s thinking, in which context he tackles explicitly the "auditory-sonorous," is sexuality, confession, and pastoral power. In the first part of this book, we noted that Foucault sets forth an analysis of "confession" as a *phonocentric regime*, already in his early 1960s "Introduction" to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Dialogues*. When Foucault returns to this theme, in the 1970s, we find no references to his own earlier treatment of Rousseau. Moreover, to compare, while we do find a number of scattered, somewhat brief references to Rousseau in Foucault's work from the 1970s, among these there is no comparable, detailed treatment on Rousseau's thinking. Now, the issues of confession and pastoral power are not developed explicitly in relation to Rousseau (see Foucault 2001a: 876, 1458; 2001b: 185, 195–6, 302, 538, 599, 653–4, 677, 1005–6, 1541, 1597).

In a discussion from 1977, published with the title "The Eye of Power" (*L'œil du pouvoir*) (ibid.: 190–207), Foucault does revisit the idea of transparency in Rousseau's thought. However, he appears to have abandoned his own earlier insight on the phonocentric nucleus in Rousseau's discourse of diaphaneity. In contrast to the 1960s "Introduction," on this occasion Foucault interprets Rousseau's idea of transparency in terms of the eye, the surveying gaze, and visibility; indeed, bringing it very close to his view of the Panopticon. As a treatment of Rousseau's phonocentrism, "Introduction" really seems to stand alone in Foucault's *œuvre*.

Still, this does not mean that the more overarching key insight found in "Introduction"—the critical scrutiny of confession as a *non-ocularcentric* yet *sensual-empirical* regime of power—would have disappeared from the Foucault of the 1970s. What is most significant is that in the various texts of Foucault, in which the name of Jean-Jacques Rousseau is not even mentioned, but in which he deals explicitly with confession, pastoral power and sexuality, we also find detailed discussions on the "empiricism" of this form of power. Together with *History of Sexuality*, it is above all the 1974–5 Collège de France lecture course "Abnormal" (*Les Anormaux*), as well as the essay entitled "The Life of Infamous People" (*La vie des hommes infâmes*) (published in 1977) (ibid.: 237–53) that are most central in that respect.⁴

In the 1970s works, when Foucault examines the form of power-knowledge he now calls *scientia sexualis* and *dispositive* or *deployment of sexuality*, ranging from the Christian pastoral and confession to modern psychiatry, he stresses in a somewhat coherent manner that the former are to be understood in terms of the *sensualization of power* (Foucault 1981b: 44).⁵ At the general level, this sensualization refers to the positive and productive (instead of negative-repressive) functioning of this power, taking place through the intensification of bodies (or certain regions of bodies), through the "electrification" of their surfaces, through the dramatization

and "scandalization" (instead of silencing or hiding) of the distinctive manifestations, appearances and expressions of the singular fabric of pleasures and desires of each human being (ibid.: 36–49, 105–8; 1999: especially 3–48, 108–26, 155–86). It is also this general sensualization to which Foucault is referring, when he states that modern society is "in actual fact, and directly, perverse" (Foucault 1981b: 47).

Also, we should observe that Foucault analyzes confession as a technology of power that is sensual or sensualized. Confession is, first of all, a technique of communication, of mutual exchange, but one that is not limited to the signifying operations of speech. Besides, confession extends into the exchange and diffusion of excitements and agitations, of intensive sensations and pleasures in the network of power-relations (between the penitent and confessor). Sensualized power works by generating and encouraging sensual/sensitive proximities or inductive contacts between bodies, rather than the distance, detachment, and "insensitivity" associated with the sovereign and juridical model of power. Instead, what characterizes pastoral power is precisely its functioning through the exhaustive and instant transfer taking place between the pastor and each and every singular "lamb" in the "flock" (ibid.: 36–49, 105–8; 1999: especially 3–48, 108–26, 155–86; 2004a: 172–5).

The central medium of pastoral power is precisely the instantaneous and all-encompassing opening out and sharing, so perfect that everything happening in the lives of the "flock"—all their sensations, desires, temptations, and pleasures—the pastor must feel and experience just as if they were his/her own, happening in his/her own body and soul, and not in someone else's. This means also that the practice of pastoral power is only possible through the inevitable exposure of the pastor to the risk of "contamination" and "falling" through the constant and immediate sharing of sensations (ibid.: 36–49, 105–8; 1999: especially 3–48, 108–26, 155–86; 2004a: 172–5).

Thus, we can see that Foucault actually does revisit the central insight found already in the early "Introduction"—the working of power through the intimate, sensual-affective proximity and sharing—and elaborates it further, without there needing to be any explicit reference either to Rousseau, or to "Introduction."

Furthermore, there are convergences between "Introduction" and the 1970s genealogies, when it comes to Foucault's more specific examination of the sensualization of power. He recurrently states that from the Christian examination of conscience up until modern psychiatry, the flesh and concupiscence—the field of instincts, desires, and pleasures—have been constituted as *something to be listened to*, as *something to be heard*. The *dispositives of hearing and understanding* are an integral part of the genealogy of sexuality, finding their modern form in the methods of *clinical listening*. In a sense, the genealogy of confession and dispositive of sexuality culminates in the entrance to the scene of the *most famous ears of our epoch*,

as Foucault calls Sigmund Freud, and in the birth of psychoanalysis, in which hearing and listening, as a technique of the unconscious instincts and desires, become perhaps even more significant than ever before (Foucault 1981b: 7, 31–5, 38–9, 62–3, 67–8, 112–14).

We should not think that the listening at issue would only and exclusively be focused on speech. Foucault is perfectly explicit in his view that confession, and the examination of conscience as such, are only partly verbal. The first-person singular form of the confession finds its accomplishment in the *sound of the penitent's voice*. Correspondingly, the techniques and arts of listening, the hearing-dispositives, do not exclude, but include; in other words they set out to *hear the sonority* as an indispensable constituent of the confessional truth, indispensable for the strategies of grasping and taking charge of the flesh and concupiscence. In a consistent manner, Foucault notes that the modern, psycho-medical technology of clinical listening also works through auditory perception of voice, of its *unique sonority*, of its *tone* or *tenor*, and by rationalizing the former as signs through which the singular sexuality, the core of abnormality, and the nucleus of dangers, are detected (Foucault 1999: 144, 155–86; 2001b: 245–6).⁶

The power-knowledge that obstinately searches for the truth of the everyday life of each and every singular human being, in the name of immediacy and authenticity calls forth expressions that are rude, awkward, and obscene. They are utterances with *savage intensities*, or speech that *vibrates* in its perfect fidelity to its affective-emotional-instinctive origins. Confessional expressions are, and should be, in other words, unmediated by decency, neat articulation, or eloquence. They should be immediate and authentic rather than follow all the rules of discourse, thus occasionally *approximating noise* rather than speech (ibid.: 237–53).

Above, I have attempted to show the reemergence and re-elaboration in new contexts of the central insights discovered already in Foucault's 1962 "Introduction": the sensuality or sensualization of power-knowledge, taking charge of the singular self, and the role of the auditory-sonorous or vocal, which is not downplayed or submitted under the eye, gaze, and visibility. There are, however, also differences that we should acknowledge between "Introduction" and the 1970s genealogies. Firstly, as we have seen, in "Introduction" the question of the historical and political significance, and the more general relevance of Foucault's insights remained inarticulate. In the 1970s work he is explicit about his view on the centrality of the development of confession and the hearing-dispositives in the history of the Western world, from Christianity to modern psychiatry.

Although, as it has been shown, the auditory-sonorous-vocal has its irreducible role, what we do not find in the 1970s genealogies is the idea of phonocentrism that was central in "Introduction," i.e. the distribution of the different modalities of the "empirical" around the center provided by voice and hearing. What comes to the fore in the 1970s analyses, is the account of power-knowledge, in which other modalities of sensual

perception besides the vocal-auditory are mobilized as well in the formation of the "singular truth," without any one modality (neither the auditory-sonorous-vocal, nor the optic-visual) occupying the center. Thus, Foucault can state that pastoral power is "*the empirical power of the eye, of the gaze, of the ear, of the hearing of the priest*" (Foucault 1999: 165, my emphasis).

Pastoral power is empirical power, in which the eye, the gaze, the ear, and the listening of the priest are all at work. All sorts of varieties of sensuality and perception, apparently in an interplay of mutual supplementation, are mobilized in order to track down as perfectly as possible all the movements of the flesh, to reveal the totality of the desiring body, without leaving any zones of secrecy. Correspondingly, the modern psycho-medical power (with its objective of taking charge of sexuality as a whole), in its sensual-perceptual operation, is characterized not only by hearing and listening, but also as *verging on bodies*, as *touching* or *brushing against them*, or as *caressing bodies with eyes*, a sort of mixture of optic with *tactile-haptic* perceptions. Besides these, various similar depictions can be found in Foucault's analyses of the "empiricism" of pastoral power and the dispositive of sexuality, throughout their developments (Foucault 1981b: especially 43–7; 1999: especially 23–48, 108–26, 155–86; 2004a: 127–98).

Indeed, Foucault suggests that modern psycho-medical power, and its self-legitimation, might actually refer back to a somewhat irrational belief in the powers of immediate sensuality, in some sort of "superhuman" capacity to predict by sensing or feeling (in a quasi-haptic manner), or by "smelling," all forms of madness and virtual criminality, where no "layman" could suspect anything. This psycho-medical "hypersensitivity" comes to the fore, in a humorous tenor, as Foucault compares the psychiatrist with the princess of the fairytale:

You all know the stories of the sort: If you have a foot small enough to fit into the glass slipper, you will be the queen; if you have a finger fine enough to receive the golden ring, you will be the queen; if your skin is fine enough so that the tiniest pea placed under the pile of feather mattresses bruises it, to the point of your being covered with bruises the following day, if you are capable of doing all that, you will be the queen [...] the medical knowledge-power will respond: See how indispensable my science is, because *I am capable of feeling the danger even where no reason can make it appear* [...] I am capable of showing you that at the basis of all madness, there is the virtuality of a crime, and consequently, justification of my proper power.

(Foucault 1999: 112–14, my emphasis)

Through all these accounts of the "empiricism" and sensualization, discovered in Foucault's 1970s work, neither the optic-visual, nor the auditory-sonorous-vocal has a univocal status of center or preeminence.

The empirical regime at issue is neither ocularcentric, nor phono- or audio-centric, but rather *multi-sensual* or *pluri-sensual*. We could also say that according to this account, the dispositive of sexuality and confessional-pastoral power are *centrifugal* rather than *centripetal* in their organization and manner of functioning. They are constantly and dynamically articulating across and between the whole spectrum of different kinds of perceptions and sensualities, none of which occupies any status of fixed center or preeminence.

On this point, there is a disjuncture between the 1970s genealogies and "Introduction," in which the confessional regime was characterized as being *phonocentric*, i.e. organized around the primacy of voice. Moreover, it is interesting to observe that with insight on the multi- or pluri-sensuality, Foucault's analysis in fact grasps better the core of Rousseau's idea of confessional discourse now than it did in "Introduction," despite the fact that he does not refer to Rousseau in the 1970s works discussed (cf. the discussion in Part I).

However, this disjuncture notwithstanding, there is also continuity that cannot be denied, one that is most significant considering our basic aim: the critical treatment of a form of empirical power in which vision does not have any position of centrality or preeminence. Both in "Introduction" and in the 1970s genealogies discussed above, the modalities of sensuality and perception other than vision have a prominent and insubordinate role in the organization and working of the power that penetrates the unique self. In "Introduction," voice occupied the center as the medium of the self's exteriorization, whereas in the various 1970s genealogies we have encountered a multi- or pluri-sensual idea of power. What remains coherent in these is Foucault's emphasis on the non-ocularcentric character of confessional power.

Multitudes and noise-abatement

In Foucault's 1970s thinking, we can still discover one central issue, in which the "auditory-sonorous" is explicitly given a significant role. This time, it is not in the working of individualizing power and knowledge (discipline or pastoral power), but on the contrary, in the resistance to the former. *Masses, crowds, swarms, plebs, and multitudes* are all names by which Foucault refers to this resistance, without really making systematic, conceptual difference between them.

There are certain auditory and sonorous tropes that emerge, in various instances, when Foucault characterizes masses, crowds, multitudes, etc. There is, first, the *noise* or *howling* of masses. There is also the *chatter* and *chanson* that they generate. Foucault relates these sounds to certain other essential qualities of the masses: above all, their *centrifugal* and *diffuse* mobility, movement in which bodies and forces spread, in which they come into contact with one another, in which they generate multiple horizontal

conjunctions with each other, all this without any direction from above, or from a center of any kind. Foucault makes it clear that these horizontal contacts and conjunctions bring about a *merging, mingling, or confusion* between bodies. They run against individualizing limits and distances, and emplacements or localizations. The mobility is also set against the claims of counting, quantity, and number. The multitudes in question are not quantitative, but qualitative; neither subject, nor object, but anonymous dynamics of penetration, defying the principle of identity and distinction, i.e. the familiar notion of *methexis* again, which we have already discussed in other contexts (Foucault 1979: 143, 170, 197–8, 200–1, 218–19).

It is in Henri Bergson's thought (from the late-nineteenth century) that we meet the concept of qualitative multiplicity or multitude, and its difference from the quantitative. It is Bergson also, who forcefully argues for the affinity between qualitative multiplicity and the "auditory-sonorous." Sound and hearing is the medium of the incessantly changing, participatory, "sympathetic," and penetrative contacts, which constitute the whole existence of a qualitative multitude. Sound is *pure quality*, and the sensual manifestation of non-chronological, non-punctual, non-spatial, and immeasurable *temporal duration* (Bergson 1993: 64–5, 75–8, 89–93, 122–9, 142–4, 170–4; 1996: 102–4, 163–7, 181–2, 196). It is from Bergson, above all, that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari adopt and further elaborate the idea of the kinship between qualitative multitudes and sound (see, e.g., Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

Admittedly, the nature of the affinity between the "auditory-sonorous" and the multitudes does not become very clear in the 1970s Foucault. His remarks remain brief and fairly allusive. We will have to wait until the final *Collège de France* lectures to meet a more explicit and broader take on the issue (we will explore this in Part III). Still, even if we remain in the 1970s, we cannot doubt that the emission, spreading, and reception of sound, i.e. auditory-sonorous events, belong to the horizontal, centrifugal relations, through which the multitudes are generated and exist as such. There is a link between the mass-crowd-multitudes, and the "auditory-sonorous," which is to be thought of in terms of *methexis*.

One of the most perceptive (in its minuscule, sensual details) analyses of crowds, is Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power*. In many ways, it sits closely to Foucault's ideas of masses and crowds. Yet, Canetti's work could be read as "complementing" the 1970s Foucault in its depiction of the *sensorium of the crowd*, i.e. of the role of sensation and perception in their formation. In the following passage, we can note the centrality of sound:

Everything shouts together; the din is the applause of objects. There seems to be a special need for this kind of noise at the beginning of events, when the crowd is still small and little or nothing has happened. The noise is a promise of the reinforcements the crowd hopes for, and a happy omen for deeds to come (Canetti 1984: 20, my emphasis) [...] the

outcry must be spontaneous [...] the spontaneous and never quite predictable outcry of a crowd is unmistakable, and its effect enormous (ibid.: 39, my emphasis) [...] The sea has a voice, which is very changeable and almost always audible. It is a voice which sounds like a thousand voices [...] But what is most impressive about it is its persistence. The sea never sleeps: by day and by night it makes itself heard [...] In its impetus and its rage it brings to mind the one entity which shares these attributes in the same degree; that is, the crowd. (Ibid.: 94, my emphasis)

The crowd has a voice, a voice that is always already many voices, one voice and a thousand voices at once; or in reality, neither one of these exclusive alternatives. The crowd's voice is an *uncountable voice*, one that is constantly audible, as well as constantly changing, without identity, like the sound of the sea. Its emission is spontaneous and unexpected, resisting all calculation, like the crowd's existence as such. The enormous effect of this sound is not only the expression of the crowd's nature and constitution (making it heard), but also, the strengthening of the crowd, the stimulation and invigoration of its spreading, and of its becoming more and more dense. In the dynamic, moving, constantly changing, not quantitative but qualitative multiplicity, we discover the common nature of crowd, sound, sea, and fire:

Fire is the same wherever it breaks out: it spreads rapidly; it is contagious and insatiable; it can break out anywhere, and with great suddenness; it is multiple; it is destructive [...] All this is true of the crowd [...] Few can resist its contagion [...] It can arise wherever people are together, and its spontaneity and suddenness are uncanny. It is multiple, but cohesive. It is composed of large numbers of people, but one never knows exactly how many (ibid.: 89) [...] The sea is multiple, it moves, and it is dense and cohesive. Its multiplicity lies in its waves; they constitute it. They are innumerable [...] They are never entirely still [...] The dense coherence of the waves is something which men in a crowd know well. It entails a yielding to others as though they were oneself, as though there were no strict division between oneself and them.

(Ibid.: 93)

In the formation of the crowd, the "auditory-sonorous" appears to be in complicity with touch and tactile-haptic experience. Together, they relate subjects with one another in the density in which the impossible takes place: the anonymous other is as proximate to me, and I am just as proximate to the other, as I am to myself, as the self is to itself. An equal there; no distinctions count, not even that of sex (ibid.: 15–19).⁷

The anonymity of the crowd or multitude, one that we have traced in Foucault's thought, and above in Canetti's, means that what contacts and touches an individual cannot only be whoever, but whatever, suspending

even the distinction of *who* and *what*, of human and non-human, of animate and inanimate. The crowd and the crowd's voice/noise suspend the fundamental distinction constituting the "political," and demarcating it from the "apolitical." To compare, e.g., Hannah Arendt stresses that the distances, which relate but also separate, constitute the political-public space. The public sphere relates, only while maintaining the distance and the distinctness between those who are thus related. The political-public realm actually prevents the "becoming too proximate," i.e. it prevents the loss of distance and distinction between the persons encountering each other. The public sphere, as the "table" between the persons, prevents the persons from touching each other; it prevents their coming into immediate contact: only the table is tangible, and it must be so, in order to prevent the touching between the ones it relates. Contact and touch entail the loss of the separating and gathering public space. The loss of the solid table is, in Arendt's vocabulary as well, what constitutes the mass, the adversary of her idea of the political, in which we can still perhaps discover traces of the phobia of touch, which might be related to the phobia of noise, the two sensual modalities of anonymity:

The public realm gathers us together and yet prevents us falling over each other. What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and to separate them [...] see the table vanish from their midst, so that two persons sitting opposite each other were no longer separated but also would be entirely unrelated to each other by anything tangible.

(Arendt 1969: 52–3)

In the setting of Foucault's 1970s thinking, the crowds, masses, and multitudes are, indeed, in a relation of antagonism with disciplinary power, i.e. the dispositive that individualizes, and through the individualization, takes charge of the usefulness and productivity of bodies and forces. The non-individualizing masses are useless and dangerous from the angle of discipline. Due to the role of sound in the formation of masses, a tensed relationship issues also between the "auditory-sonorous" and disciplinary power. Sound and hearing find themselves under suspicion, together with other kinds of horizontal relations and dynamics, which bring about confusion and mingling. In the variety of its applications, the disciplinary-panoptic dispositive strives to eliminate, to break up, this horizontal dynamic:

[I]f they are patients, there is no danger of contagion [...] if they are school-children, there is no copying, *no noise, no chatter*, no waste of time (Foucault 1979: 200–1, my emphasis) [...] All the collective phenomena, all the phenomena of multiplicity find themselves in this

way totally abolished. And, as Bentham says with satisfaction, in the schools, there will be no longer "copying," which is the debut of the immorality; in the workshops there will be no longer collective distraction, songs, strikes; in the prisons, no longer complicity; and in the mental asylums, no longer those phenomena of collective irritation, imitation, etc. You see there, how this whole network of group communications, all these collective phenomena, which are perceived [...] as being just as well the medical contagion as the moral diffusion of the bad, all those phenomena will find themselves entirely broken by the system of the panoptic.

(Foucault 2003: 77, my emphasis)

Sound and auditory perception are among the dynamic relations characterized by the *diffusion*, *spreading*, and *contagion* between individuals. These mobile relations, as seen in the citation, can also be understood in terms of *methexis*. What takes place in all of these—also through *noise*, *chatter*, and *chanson*—is a movement of transition between individuals, from one to another. The contagion can happen between mental states, between affects, between virtues and vices, or between tasks and their performances (collective distractions). Through sounds, the subjects share with each other what should (according to the logic of disciplinary individualization) be separate and divided. Noise, chatter, and singing are such events of non-individualization.⁸ In this sense, the conflict with sound, the conflict with noise, and the strategy of *noise-abatement* is not only a particular application of disciplinary power, but belongs to the logic of the disciplinary dispositive itself.⁹

When Foucault, in the late 1970s, analyzes the genealogy of modern forms of governance, and the metamorphoses of the state and sovereignty, he explicitly takes up the issue of noise. Now, Foucault stresses how noise, in the discursive formation of the *reason of state*, *raison d'État* (in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) was classified as a sign of disobedience, as an alarming signal of seditions and revolts threatening the force of the state as such:

The sea swells up in secret [...] and it is precisely *this signalism*, *this semiotics of the revolt*, which must be established. In a period of peace, how can one locate the possibility of sedition in the process of forming? Among the signs are noises [...] which begin to circulate [...]

(Foucault 2004a: 273, my emphasis)

To this, we should add that the role of noise, in the history of Western governance and governmental-political reason, is not limited to that of a mere "signal." The issue does not fade away, or lose its political significance, as we move forward in history. In fact, it was during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that the classification of noise as a

political-governmental problem became better established in the industrialized European states and in the United States of America as well. Noise was classified not only as a signal or symptom of the problems, but even more importantly, as the cause of the most serious problems. Noise was defined as a serious threat, against which individuals, as well as the population as a whole, should be defended by appropriate governmental actions of intervention, especially inside urban city spaces. The existence of noise should be minimized, or better yet, terminated from the realm of the society altogether. The governmental "utopia" became the purification of modern society from noise, which is, as we know, one of the inevitable side-products of work, production, industrialization, and of urbanization. (For interesting studies on the history of noise-abatement, see Baron 1982; Bijsterveld 2001; Schwartz 2003; Thompson 2004; especially 115–46).¹⁰

From this starting point, the industrialized and urbanized Western states elaborated and put into practice various policies of noise-abatement. These became significant in the governance over modern city spaces, over the living environments of populations. They were a part of the governmental project of public hygiene. Increasingly systematic, rationalized state-interventions were made into the sonorous and acoustic environment of the cities, into what could be called the city-soundscape. In this way, inside the general framework of the stately government of public hygiene, the birth of what could be called *acoustic* and *sonorous public hygiene* took place. Often, where possible, people were encouraged to choose the silent use of visual signs and modes of communication to replace auditory-sonorous ones (ibid.).

Not only the practices and technologies of noise-abatement (rules, discipline, the police), but also the political rationality that defined noise as an urgent problem, were (and still are in our own days) in accordance with the general strategic principles of *raison d'État*: the calculation of the means to maintain and increase the resources of the state, its forces, and its wealth, including the productivity and the health of the population. It is in this calculative matrix that noise was defined as a threat to the state (ibid.).

The discourses, in which these governmental policies were elaborated and justified, were typically a conglomerate of medical, psychological, economist, and even social-scientific forms of knowledge. Looking at the modern, scientific, and governmental determinations of the threat of noise, behind the scientific language we see a list of qualities which reminds us of one ancient idea, i.e. *methexis*: participation and sharing, penetration, merging, and contagion taking place between what should remain separate—between individuals, between self and the other, between tasks and their performances (ibid.).

When it comes directly to the economic sphere of production and labor, noise poses a threat, because it causes the distraction of the worker from the performance of the proper, assigned task, by way of sharing and taking part in another's activities. This sort of contagion and merging between the

lines or trajectories of activities, between the series or sequences of performances, and between their performers too, means nothing less than a blurring and collapse of the division of tasks, of the functional organization of the forces of labor and production. The consequence is the lowering of the level of productivity. This threat makes the noise-abatement at workshops, factories, and other working-environments an urgent task (ibid.).¹¹

To summarize, in modern medical-psychological discourse, noise has been classified as a serious threat to mental health, as a cause of abnormalities, of personality disorders, and neuroses in particular. It is above all through the ear and hearing, through their helpless and defenseless openness, that an individual is exposed permanently to the bombardment by the flows of sound, to impulses, forces, and affects; ones that are continuously permeating and gradually threatening to dissolve the limit between the self and the other, between interiority and exteriority. At its worst, noise could cause the final dissolution of the coherent personality. Since the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, these have been pertinent lines in the political-governmental reasoning that has defined noise as a serious problem to be abated by means of systematic intervention (ibid.).

All this is relevant, when studying the nexus of governance and modern political reason, on the one hand, and the differentiations and divisions brought to bear on the senses, on the other. The threatening potential is located in what is taken as the "natural qualities," i.e. in the very inherent constitution of the faculty of auditory perception, and of the sensory medium of sound as such, independently of the question of specific "content."

This determination of the inherently dangerous character of the "auditory-sonorous" as the locus of exposure to the dangers of abnormality, and to pathologies of various sorts, is something that cannot easily be found when it comes to other modes of sensory perception and media. In the framework of the modern political and "stately" reason, noise generated by sounds and auditory perception has been considered to be, in the most direct and evident manner, politically dangerous, because it is not only the signal, but also the cause of mass revolts (ibid.).

We have witnessed the persistent recurrence of an Ancient Greek mythical setting in the development of modern governance and political reason: the antagonism between noise and noisemaking (*bromos*, *bremein*) and the existence and maintenance of the political community. This conflict is, I believe, still pertinent in today's modes of governance, in the policies of noise-abatement and public acoustic hygiene. In accordance with the mythical model, the government believes itself to be confronted by a lethal threat: the spreading contagion of madness through noise, making all those infected leave their proper places, their assigned tasks, their fixed identities and roles; thus impairing or even totally paralyzing the indispensable functions of the community, and the indispensable forces/resources of the state.

There is something archaic in modern reason, in its fear, and its relentless struggle against noise.

The liberal governmentality, *homo œconomicus*, and the threat of noise

The problem and the dangerousness of noise, which is supposedly generated in the spreading and merging of sounds, and in the open, indiscriminate exposure of the ear, is not defined only inside the framework of *raison d'État*. Following Foucault consistently, when considering the genealogy of governmentality, the next question is: What happens to the problem of noise, to the definition and treatment of the dangerous potentiality of sound, when turning from the reason of state to the framework of *liberalism*?

The aim is to ask whether and how certain themes, coming to the fore in Foucault's analysis of the *liberal* and *neoliberal governmentality*, relate to the issue of perception, and above all, to sound and auditory perception. Are there certain points in Foucault's thinking, through the elaboration of which we can gain insights into the issue of the liberalist politics of the sensorium? This refers to the manner in which the subject of liberalism, the free individual agent, is constituted as a subject of perception of a certain kind. The emphasis is on the fate of auditory perception and experience, or the fate of the "ear" in the production of the liberal subject, as Foucault discusses it in both the classical liberalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as in the twentieth century's German ordoliberalism and American neoliberalism.

One of the central points in Foucault's analysis is the conception, *homo œconomicus*, i.e. the economic man, the economic subject, the economic agent, and its centrality for the liberalist form of governance. The development of the concept of *homo œconomicus* proceeds from the utility-maximizing subject and the subject of exchange of the classical liberalism, to the *calculating entrepreneur-subject*, the entrepreneur of one-self and of one's proper capacities (of "human capital") in post-World War II neoliberalism:

homo œconomicus as partner of the exchange, theory of utility beginning from a problematics of the needs: that is what characterizes the classic conception of the *homo œconomicus* [...] In neoliberalism [...] *homo œconomicus* [...] is an entrepreneur, and an entrepreneur of oneself [...] being in oneself one's proper capital, being for oneself one's proper producer, being for oneself the source of [one's] incomes [...] The consumer, inasmuch as she consumes, is a producer. What does she produce? Well, she produces very simply her own satisfaction.

What remains central, though, through all the historical changes in the concept, is the determination of the subject in terms of the formal rationality of means-ends calculation, offering the strategic principle of choices and conduct. In American neoliberalism, homo oeconomicus becomes a "grid" that is extended to domains that are not immediately and directly economic, while economic analysis begins to cover all finalized conduct, all behavior that implies a strategic choice of means, ways and instruments. All rational action, which consists in using formal reasoning, and in which the agent performs an optimal allocation of rare resources between alternative ends, is economic (ibid.: 272).

The second point, emphasized especially in American neoliberalism, is one in which the issue of perception occurs. Foucault points out that the economic subject is characterized not only by the procedures of calculative reasoning, but also in "positive" terms, as the *subject of apprehension*. It is the subject facing and perceiving the reality "as it is"; that is, perceiving the objective reality, as well as accepting the objective reality, as the milieu of rational activities. Homo oeconomicus is not only the subject of means-ends calculation, but also a *subject of sensitivity*, sensitivity in perceiving the modification in the milieu of conduct, and in reacting or responding to the variations in a systematic manner:

The homo oeconomicus is the one who accepts the reality. The rational conduct, that is all conduct that is *sensitive to modifications in the variables of the milieu*, and which *responds to them in a non-aleatory manner*, hence in a *systematic manner*, and the economics will thus be able to define itself as the science of the systematics of responses to the variables of the milieu.

(Ibid.: 273, my emphasis)

The central determinations of the economical subject are: making choices and orienting its conduct according to calculative reason, and being sensitive in perceiving, accepting, and responding systematically to the "reality" and its modifications. In Foucault's account, these determinations of homo oeconomicus are central to understanding neoliberal governance, its rationality and its art of government, and the characteristic techniques it has introduced, i.e. the techniques of *environmental governance* (ibid.: 264-5).

The milieu-sensitive economic subject is precisely the surface of contact, or the interface between the individual human being and power, the surface where the liberalist mode of governance takes hold of the individuals by means of environmental interventions. This type of intervention works by modifying the milieu of the actors, instead of intervening directly upon the individuals themselves. The environmental governance has its central "resource," the guarantee and condition of its effectiveness, precisely in the sensitivity of the subjects, in their sensitive (as well as free) responsiveness to

modifications in their environment. The environmental governance, neoliberal governance par excellence, has its essential correlative in the constitution of homo oeconomicus not only as a formally rational/calculating subject, but also as the sensitive and sensory subject; as the subject of perception that perceives accurately and accepts the empirical milieu of its activity in all its variations:

[H]omo æconomicus is the one who accepts the reality, or who responds systematically to the modifications in the variables of the milieu. This homo æconomicus appears precisely as the *one who is easily influenced*, the one who is going to respond systematically to the systematic modifications that will be introduced artificially inside the milieu. Homo æconomicus is the one *who is eminently governable*. From intangible partner of laissez-faire, homo æconomicus appears now as the correlative of a *governmentality that is going to act upon the milieu and modify systematically the variables of the milieu*.

(Ibid.: 274-5, my emphasis)

Neoliberal governmentality does not adjust governance on the rationality, knowledge, and all-seeing perception of the sovereign, who could say "I am the State." Instead, the starting point of governance is the rationality, as well as the empirical sensitivity, of those who are governed, i.e. the economic subjects (ibid.: 258, 316). Hence, it is absolutely central for the functioning of neoliberal governance that subjects are constituted as subjects of perception and sensitivity, of particular modes of receptivity, "reactivity," and responsiveness.

What is particularly central, not only in neoliberal, but even more broadly, in the liberal formation of the subject, is the capacity to perceive dangers and threats in one's everyday environment, and to respond to them individually:

It can be said that after all the slogan of the liberalism, is *"to live dangerously,"* or rather, people are conditioned to experience their situation, their life, their present, their future, as being carriers of danger [...] *There is no liberalism without the culture of danger.*"

(Ibid.: 68, my emphasis)

In the liberal culture of danger, the dangers are given a determinate form, and they are perceived in a particular manner. The dangers of everyday life are objectified, as risks, and their grasping and recognition is a rational risk-awareness. The economic subject is constantly emplacing or localizing the risks—dangers in her/his environment of activity; she/he gives them determinate coordinates, and detects their causes. Each individual subject is supposed to submit dangers under calculations of probabilities, and further more, to take measures of prevention, elimination, or minimization.

This empirical, calculative, and active culture of dangers as risks is the opposite of such an apocalyptic imagery of inescapable, transcendent, overwhelming, and "paralyzing" menaces, which had a central role in the political and cosmological culture of the Middle Ages, and still in the seventeenth century. The generalized as well as individualized risk-awareness has been "educated" through a variety of means, e.g. the early nineteenth century's campaigns for savings associations, detective novels, and crime journalism (ibid.)

Foucault's emphasis on perception and sensitivity discussed above, provokes a number of further questions. How are the liberal perceptivity, sensuality, and sensitivity determined? In other words, what is the sensorium of homo oeconomicus like, and what does it exclude? Is there a differentiation between modalities of perception at play in liberal and neoliberal cultures of danger, and how are the different senses qualified and organized? What is the empirical-sensual regime of the neoliberal subject, and finally, what is the place of the ear, sense of hearing, and sound, in this regime?

It is unfortunate for us that Foucault does not address these questions directly in more detail. However, we can still attempt to do so by returning to some of our earlier discussions. At the beginning of this book, we explored Foucault's early 1960s insights on *noise* and *murmur*. In this context, we came across Foucault's reading of a story of Franz Kafka, entitled "The Burrow." We saw that Foucault was reading the story as a depiction of the anonymous nature of language and its repetitive movement. What if we now came back to this story, and set out to reread it in a new context, the genealogy of liberal and neoliberal governmentality? I suggest that the story offers us a vivid demonstration of what can happen in the encounter of sound and auditory perception, of noise, with a subject's relentless attempt to locate a danger or threat, and to defend itself, its property, and its private space. We are told what can happen, when homo oeconomicus confronts the problem of noise.

To recall, the story unfolds from the perspective of an unknown creature, which is building and inhabiting an underground burrow, or rather a complex of caves. What really comes to the fore in the story, is the depiction of the mentality of the creature, which is possessive and hyper-calculative: the creature is constantly performing calculations concerning its property, the things it possesses, in order to maintain it, to stock it adequately, to increase it, and to prevent its loss by any possible cause, to protect and defend it against all possible dangers. The planning of the most effective defensive measures is the real *raison d'être* of the architectural design. Essentially, the creature wants to have an "overview," a surveying, "global" grasp of the space and of the possessions:

In this castle-place I assemble my stores, everything that I capture inside the Burrow over and above my current needs, and everything that

I bring along from my yachts outside, I pile up here. The place is so great, that stores for half a year do not fill it. Consequently, I can really spread them out, walk around among them, play with them, rejoice their plenty and their different odors, and *always have an accurate overview upon what is available*. Then, as well, I can always make reassignments and, corresponding to the season, make the necessary calculations and hunting plans for the future. The *continual preoccupation with defensive preparations* brings it about, that my views concerning the making use of the burrow for such goals change or develop, albeit within narrow limits.

(Kafka 1994–2007, my emphasis)

The primary concern of the creature in the story is to keep the private space empty, i.e. without intrusions. The creature feels safe knowing that only itself and its possessions are surrounded by the enclosed space. The perception of the tranquility of privacy is provided, above all, by the ear and audition, and more exactly, by the absence of sound. To feel safe, to know that it is safe, and that its possessions are intact, the creature needs silence or stillness:

But the most beautiful thing about my burrow is its stillness. Of course, that is deceitful. All of a sudden at once *it can be interrupted and all is finished*. For the moment, however, it is still here. For hours I can creep around my corridors and *hear nothing* [...] There I sleep the sweet sleep of peace, of appeased desire, of *achieved goal of possessing a house* [...] regularly every now and then I start up out of deep sleep and listen, *listen into the stillness which reigns here unchanged day and night*, smile feeling reassured and sink with loosened limbs into still deeper sleep [...] I lie here in a place secured on every side—there are more than fifty such places in my burrow [...] *Your house is protected, enclosed into itself*. You live in peace, warm, well nourished, *master, sole master over a variety of corridors and places* [...] *And all, all still and empty* [...]

(ibid.: my emphasis)

Silence, as the absence of sound, indicates for the master-owner the emptiness, the absence of movement, the absence of activity, and the absence of intrusions inside the private space. It is only this stillness, which tells that the property and one's continuing ownership over it are secured. Silence provides the possessive subject with certainty that in a sovereign manner it disposes over the property, and over the use of this property, that it can consume it freely to satisfy its desires, to enjoy the things it owns, without having to share with anyone, and without anyone threatening to take it away. Only the soundlessness indicates that this state of privacy is unquestioned.

Then, suddenly, there is the turning point in the story, a point at which everything changes. This is the moment, when an unexpected sound, a noise, is heard. The noise itself is already an intruder, intruding from the outside into the private space, disturbing and interrupting the sovereign, free enjoyment of the possessions. Logically, then, the next phase in the calculation of the subject is a kind of noise-abatement, which is also apprehension of the risk and its elimination:

[F]or a hissing hardly audible in itself awakens me [...] I shall, listening sharply to the walls of my corridor, *first have to detect the location of the disturbance* through experimental excavations, and *only then will I be able to eliminate the noise* [...] Then there would be no noises in the walls, no insolent excavations up till the place itself, then *the peace would be guaranteed there and I would be its guard* [...]

(ibid.: my emphasis)

Kafka's hyper-calculating creature behaves precisely in the manner of a rational, economic subject: it does what every homo oeconomicus should do in this situation. The creature attempts to emplace and locate the sound, to pursue its trajectory proceeding from one point to the next. We have already encountered similar spatializations in listening, first in medical auscultation, and then in panauditory surveillance. In Kafka's story as well, by tracing the sound's trajectory, the rational subject hopes to be able to locate and deal with the origin of the sound: the risk, the leak, the hole, or the malfunction in the spatial construction. The subject, thus, must resort to an activity of listening, in which these spatializing operations can be accomplished.

Homo oeconomicus is now a listening subject, whose property and own life depend on its ability and art of listening. The creature has been exercising such listening already for a long time, perfecting the sharpness of distinction-making. In Kafka's story, self-protection and self-defense are now dependent on the accuracy, and on the sensitivity of the ear.

In this manner, if there is a hierarchy of the modes of sensory perception, organized by the calculative reasoning, the primacy is demonstratively given here to listening instead of the gaze. When the intruder is seen, if it will be seen, it will already be too late. The enemy must be located through its sounds without waiting for it to show itself, through listening that seems to conform to the calculative-rational model of surveillance, as well as risk-detection. However, as the story proceeds, it becomes clear that things are not as simple as this, that the endeavor of economic listening is anything but easy, and anything but certain of its success. Although the creature of the Burrow is self-confident at first, it soon runs into difficulties:

As I have great practice in investigations of this kind, it will probably not take long and I can begin with it immediately; there are other jobs,

admittedly, but this is the most urgent one, it must be silent in my corridors [...] I start the investigation, but *I do not manage to find the place where one should intervene*, I do make a few excavations, but only at random; naturally that has no result [...] *I do not come at all nearer to the place where the noise is*, it resounds always unchanged, in a thin sound, with regular pauses, now like hissing, but then like piping [...] Now I listen to the walls of the castle-place, and where I listen, high and low, to the walls or to the ground, to the entrances or inside, *everywhere, everywhere the same noise* [...] *for as long as a localization has not taken place here, I cannot feel safe either* [...] But whether important or unimportant, I find nothing, no matter how much I search, or rather I find too much.

(Ibid.: my emphasis)

Even the most attentive, the most carefully exercised sort of listening cannot succeed in the urgent task, i.e. the spatial operation of emplacement or location of the noise. Despite the listener's effort, the auditory perception, even with the help of vision, does not relate the sound to any place at all, to any delimited region even, or to any delimited sector of the space. The listening cannot determine the sound in terms of spatial coordinates of points, fixed intervals, and clear-cut lines. Neither can the listener determine the location, or the direction of the sound, in the relative terms of nearer or farther. The perception of the sound's movement, its activity, its event, evades the determinacy of place, and univocal direction. The "right place" and "right direction" of the sound cannot be found, having the result that the investigation itself has no proper place of beginning or ending. The location, and the direction to proceed remain undecided, so that the investigation can only begin at random, at a random place and into a random direction.

The noise and the threat related to it intrude in the same manner from everywhere and into every place, inside and throughout all the parts and partitions of the spatial complex. There is an activity, an event, and a dynamics at play, one that penetrates through the enclosures of the private space, but one that appears to penetrate equally into and through each and every division. Anywhere the owner of the burrow goes, the noise is already there, it has already intruded there, encountering the owner again and again. The noise spreads, the danger spreads, the enemy spreads, and the thief spreads, so that there is no partition of the space that would be safe, no partition or segment that would remain intact. Yet, although the intruder is encountered everywhere, it is never apprehended fully and totally as present, it is never seized in this or that location, in this or that room. Even though the noise is encountered everywhere, although the danger is encountered everywhere, nothing is really found, i.e. no identifiable cause, no origin, no determinate object or agent, into which the sound and the threat could be traced back.

The most serious threat facing the creature of the burrow, as depicted by Kafka, is that there is nothing that would, really, face it, that there is nothing that the creature could encounter as an object placed in front of, across determinate distance. The real threat is that the noise is encountered everywhere and in no place, only in its evasive transition and transgression in between the places and rooms, in its penetration and spreading from one to the other. What the story depicts is the listening subject's becoming immersed in the sound, instead of facing it as an object. In this immersion, the sound does not occupy a space, and no longer has a position in space, but generates the space itself—or is the space itself.

For the calculating subject of possession, for the economic subject, this means that it is immersed in a menace, that it is being immersed or absorbed in and by the intruder, or the thief, while the latter no longer allows itself to be objectified at all. Hence, the intruder does not intrude by occupying, or by emplacing itself inside the private space; instead it intrudes by absorbing and swallowing the inhabitant, i.e. it intrudes by *becoming* space, and surrounding the subject. This is one way of reading Kafka's depiction of the undecidability to which the calculating subject, the subject of ownership, is exposed in its encounter with the noise.

However, this is precisely something that the calculating subject cannot and must not accept, for to accept it would mean to accept the fundamental failure of its basic attempt to calculate, to accept the ultimate limit of its calculating perception and reason. It would have to accept the existence of dangers beyond the very field of the objectified risks, and rational risk management. It would mean to give up the very attempt to take care of, to defend, and to protect oneself and one's property.

In terms of Foucault, this would be a departure from the liberal culture of danger, perhaps a return to the apocalyptic, "archaic," irrational, passive, and overwhelming experience of menace and terror; one that is omnipresent, and beyond the reach of objective knowledge. All this would be a radical deviation from the most basic, constituent norm and normativity of the liberal individual subject, of *homo oeconomicus*. The calculating agent has to face and deal with all these serious problems in its confrontation with sound and auditory perception, and in its confrontation with its own ears. To maintain its identity as *homo oeconomicus*, the hyper-calculative creature must renew its attempt to localize and beacon the noise.

After a failure, the investigation must be reenacted again and again, until the sound is finally localized, until it is without doubt located at its proper place, at its proper position, so that further measures, plans, and strategies can be made on its account. Hopefully, then, the danger would finally be eliminated, and the secure state of emptiness, tranquility, and silence of the private space, together with the intactness of the property and ownership, would be returned once again. The alternation of failures and new efforts becomes an unending process, kept going by the possessive

calculating, economic obsession, and its ever-new futile confrontations with the placeless, acoustic menace.

As the attempts to emplace and locate the noise run into difficulties, so does the related, more extensive, but equally obsessive attempt to identify the nature of the sound, and consequently, its cause (i.e. to reveal the nature of the threat). This should be done in terms of certain, empirical knowledge; not mere theoretical, *a priori* assumptions, hypotheses, or speculations.

There is already the aporia as to the quantity of the sound, as well as to the quantity and size of the intruders, of the enemies: no certainty, no decision, no solution can be reached as to whether there is one or many sounds, and whether there is one gigantic intruder or a multitude of small ones, a great beast or a swarm of tiny insects. The obsession to know, to attain the truth about the sound, agitates a relentless generation of hypotheses, as well as ever-new attempts to verify these empirically, always turning out to be unsuccessful. The result of the endeavors is always only the indecision, the uncertainty, or hesitation concerning truth or falsity of an assumption. The creature, in its encounter with the noise, is unable to verify or falsify any of its hypotheses, but is instead drawn into oscillation, going backwards and forth between the mutually exclusive presumptions on the intruder's species, its shape, and its form (perhaps it "is encircling me"). The more attentively the subject listens, the more uncertain and anguished it becomes.

Finally, there is no rest or security at all—only the obsessive and futile attempt to know, to attain the truth concerning the sound. This occupies all the time, and all the forces of the subject, making it impossible for it to focus on anything else at all. It cannot perform its usual daily tasks, all that it actually should be doing as *homo oeconomicus*. With the repeated failures to grasp the intruder comes the doubt: has the whole spatial construction been built in vain, incapable of offering any security and defense at all?

[N]ow I can neither wonder, nor look around, nor rest [...] You leap back from the wall, you try to survey at one glance all the possible consequences that this discovery will bring with it. You feel as if you had never really organized the burrow for defense against an attack [...] (ibid.)

The noise is more threatening, because it remains alien and unknown, because it cannot be grasped as a manageable risk. It is a stranger, an uninvited guest entering into the *oikos*, while remaining radically anonymous: without revealing its identity, it is moving around and making one aware of its movement, without disclosing who or what it is, or even where it is exactly. The noise is a stranger that has already entered, that has already intruded, before allowing the owner, the master of the *oikos*,

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to even ask for its name. It has already arrived unexpectedly, before and irrespective of permission, without waiting for anything like an agreement or a contract, or a granting of rights, to take place first.¹²

By the end of Kafka's story, the sound leads the creature into the sort of aporia in which the very elementary difference between the proper and the improper, the basic determination of property and the relation of ownership as such becomes undecidable. Perhaps, the creature begins to question, it has been (without knowing it) inside someone else's *oikos* all the time, perhaps it has itself intruded inside the private space of someone else, violating someone else's property, hence being itself the parasite and the thief, the *other*. Perhaps the real owner is making the noise, the one who has all the time been listening, and is now coming to eliminate *me*. This is the final and the most essential aporia in Kafka's tale, one that most fundamentally interrupts the existence of the calculating homo *oeconomicus*:

Now, I can not have expected such an opponent. But apart from its peculiarities, what happens now is still only something that I actually would have had to fear always, something against which I should have always made preparations: someone arrives [...] Perhaps I am in an alien burrow, I thought, and now the owner is burrowing his way toward me [...]

(ibid.)

The economic subject, homo *oeconomicus*, is obligated and stimulated by its very constitution into a hyper-sensitivity, hyper-sensuality, hyper-responsiveness, and hyper-reactivity, in its perception of its environment, of its milieu, of its habitat. In the encounter with its own ears, with the noises it hears, the very obsession of calculation, finally, drives the subject into a state, where it comes to the very borders of its form of existence as an economic subject. The more it listens, the more sensitive it becomes, the more carefully it attempts to take care of its property, the more it ends up losing its mastery over its property and over itself. The sensitivity, required and encouraged by the very constitution of homo *oeconomicus*, leads to the dissolution of homo *oeconomicus*, and this happens "with the help" of the ear, as we have been demonstrated.

The problem of the ear, the problem of sound and noise are also problems of the liberal governance, and perhaps of neoliberal governance in particular. The utmost maximization of the milieu-sensitivity and milieu-responsiveness, the optimization of the risk-sensitivity of the subject produces a creature that is "all ears." However, this listening creature is one in whom the hyper-sensitivity turns, in the end, into an incapacity to respond, react, or do anything at all.

In modern philosophy, we discover a reflection on sound and sense of hearing that comes close to what has been presented above, in Immanuel Kant's "Third Critique." In this passage, what is explicitly reflected is the

problematic, even antagonist relation between auditory perception and sound, on the one hand, and individual freedom or liberty on the other:

Moreover, music has a certain lack of urbanity about it. For, depending mainly on the character of its instruments, it extends its influence (on the neighborhood) farther than people wish, and so, as it were, imposes itself on others and hence impairs the freedom of those outside of the musical party. The arts that address themselves to the eye do not do this; for if we wish to keep out their impressions, we need merely turn our eyes away. The situation here is almost the same as with the enjoyment [*Ergötzung*] produced by an odor that spreads far. Someone who pulls his perfumed handkerchief from his pocket gives all those next to and around him a treat whether they want it or not, and compels them, if they want to breathe, to enjoy [*genießen*] at the same time, which is also why this habit has gone out of fashion.

(Kant 1987: §53, my emphasis)

Here, in Kant's text, liberty is understood in terms of privacy, of private space, of the sphere of detachment, of distance, of separation, of intactness and inviolability established and maintained by an individual. Liberty is security from the influence of others. The private space surrounding the individual is also the space of the liberty of enjoyment, of the freedom of enjoying and having pleasure according to one's own taste, without being bothered or interrupted by others, without having to share one's enjoyment with anyone, and without having to share, or take part in the enjoyment of others against will.

To go further still, it could be said that the privacy of the private space is also what determines the liberty of private ownership, including the liberty of using one's property, of consuming it in privacy; that is, separately and in separation. From the same basis as separation, distance—and the detachment of private space around the individual—also emanates the liberty of transactions, of contracts in general, all of which belong to the basic liberties of liberalism.

Why is sound, then, inimical to liberty (and non-urban)? Evidently, the danger is to be found in the nature of sound as an event, as movement that spreads, that extends its influence regardless of the reasoning and choices of the agents involved. The sound is transition and transgression of the borderlines, from the inside to the outside, from one to the other(s), crossing the lines contingently, beyond the governance and calculation of any agent. The question is of the voice, or the sound of who or whatever, imposing itself upon whoever.

With such characterizations, there is also the obvious juxtaposition with vision, and the perception of visual phenomena, which are apparently more susceptible to being governed by will, and much more compatible with the liberty of the subject, when it comes to the direction of attention, to the

distancing or coming closer, to the free decision in the discrimination, and in the inclusion-exclusion of the perception ("the arts that address themselves to the eye do not do this: for if we wish to keep out their impressions, we need merely to turn our eyes away"). In the visual arts and other visual phenomena, there is a susceptibility to being seized upon at will and governed by the subject: directed, placed, enclosed; hidden or covered according to the subject's whim: partitioned and owned, as something "proper" and as something made into "property."

Sound (just like a smell, actually) is constantly relating bodies to each other, is relentlessly generating contacts beyond the will of individuals. Referring again to Kant, sound spreads, and its contingent imposing itself does not only relate bodies to each other, does not only generate contacts between alien, anonymous bodies in the limited sense, but also between minds. What is most significant, and apparently most perilous to liberty, is the contingent spreading and imposing of pleasures and enjoyments between subjects, through the "non-urban" media of sound and smell. Through sound, enjoyments become shared between a plurality of persons, amongst a multitude. Or, to be still more specific, sound makes us share, take, and give part, and participate contingently, inevitably, and compellingly, in our pleasures and enjoyments. Via my ears, but also her/his ears, the other intrudes and takes part in what should be my enjoyment. Sound and hearing do not recognize the right of ownership over enjoyments; they resist the properness and the property-form of them.

A sound as such is already enough to compromise, to violate the liberty of ownership, the sort of sovereign liberty of the owner to decide over her property. Both sound and the ear essentially threaten to take away the liberty of being alone, of being in detachment and separation, inside the empty private space, in the private enjoyment of one's possessions. By the contingent and compulsive relating, associating, sharing, and participation between anonymous strangers, it can be also argued that sound and hearing are, at their very basis, violations against the liberty of contract, against the contractual model of founding inter-subjective relations. They are a sensual transference of property and "properness" in a non-contractual manner. This is how the "auditory-sonorous" becomes a problem in the framework of liberal governmentality, or even something like the non-liberal sensual modality *par excellence*.

3 Voices of care, friendship, and *parrësia*

Care of the self and the interior voice

In the period of the early 1980s, the years preceding his death, Foucault's project was to develop the ideas of *care of the self* (*epimeleia heautou*), *art of living* (*tekhnē tou biou*), as well as the *ethics* and *aesthetics of existence*. Next, we will see that the "auditory-sonorous" event has its roles in this framework as well. It will turn out that Foucault did not abandon his interest in *auditory-sonorous power*, one that we have discovered as early as the beginning of the 1960s, but tackled the issue again in relation to the most central themes of his early 1980s thought.

We will not focus on evaluating the accuracy of the readings Foucault presents on the corpus Greco-Roman philosophy, above all Stoic, Cynic, and Epicurean. (For the criticism of Foucault's interpretation, targeted among other things at his tendency to aestheticize, see a review essay by Pierre Hadot [1992].)¹ Instead, the aim is to show how Foucault, using the corpus of ancient philosophy, elaborates an interesting idea on the tensed constellation of resistance and power, with the care for the self and *logos* on one side, and the event of sound on the other.

As the background, we should keep in mind that Foucault is particularly interested in ancient Greco-Roman philosophy as a practice and exercise, and as an art of living, having life or existence as such as its "materia" that it forms, shapes, and modifies, rather than contemplates. Philosophy, in this sense, is the practice and art of creating a manner or way of existing; a style or a form of life. The task is to make one's life into a "work of art" that is beautiful and good. In this sense, there is no significant difference here between "good" and "beautiful." This is the kernel in Foucault's idea of the unity between ethics (as self-relation, self-government, and ascetics), and aesthetics (Foucault 2001c: 405–6; 2001b: 1221–2, 1430, 1443).

Foucault states very explicitly that freedom or liberty, the free choice, is nothing less than a necessary condition for the aesthetical-ethical creation of self. However, he wants to distance this idea from existentialist philosophy, by suggesting that what distinguishes his own account from Sartre, is above all Sartre's attempts to set authenticity as the foundation of freedom,